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ABSTRACT

This monograph provides a rationale for contemporary guidelines for the television and broadcast network management of sexual content in proposed progam materials. Beginning with a brief outline of the professional practices and responsibilities of broadcast standards editors, it then explores the relationships between sexual development, attitudes toward shame and nudity, and their implications for contemporary editorial decision-making. Examples of sexual themes that illustrate broadcast standards concerns about the balanced portrayal of issues and about the prospects, risks, and consequences of sexual behavior are examined, including pre-marital and extra-marital sex, teenage sex portrayals, contraception and abortion, prostitution, sexual violence and rape, homosexuality, incest, divorce and separation, and sex, gender, and sexism. A rationale is offered for the use of standardized sexual decision points, which assure the editor, network, and viewer alike that each content item has been specifically and uniformly subjected to a uniform, rational method of scrutiny. A 37-item bibliography is included. (Author/LMM)

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Sexuality, Television and Broadcast Standards

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Sexuality, Television and Broadcast Standards

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Preface

Alfred R. Schneider, *Vice President, Policy and Standards, ABC Inc.*

The American Broadcasting Company is pleased to publish this workbook, "*Sexuality, Television and Broadcast Standards,*" as a supplement to "*Broadcast Standards Editing,*" written by our respected and valued colleague, Melvin S. Heller, M.D., and published by ABC in 1978.

This supplement deals with sexuality and our efforts to objectively and sensitively approach the review and evaluation of such material in entertainment programming. The complexity of the subject required a great deal of time, much discussion, and continuing evaluation of our standards and policies.

Broadcast Standards and Practices editors discussed at length with Dr. Mel Heller, Dr. Phillip Sarrel and Ms. Lorna Sarrel, the consequences, emotional impact, and societal perceptions of proposed sexual content in our programming.

It is hoped that this monograph will serve as an insightful and helpful introduction to the evaluation of sexual content for television programming and will serve as the basis for our continued assessment of such materials.

Foreword

Phillip Sarrel, M.D., and Lorna Sarrel, M.S.W., *Yale University School of Medicine*

The power of television to influence the minds and hearts of people is enormous. Such power should inspire a proportionate sense of responsibility and concern. It is truly reassuring to see that a major network – ABC – invests so much money and authority in its department of Broadcast Standards and Practices, with a staff of over 70 full-time editors and managers.

For the past 5 years we have enjoyed being consultants to that department on sexual content in entertainment programming. We have seen a department genuinely concerned about the network's viewers, striving for accuracy, balance, fairness, taste, and sensitivity to diverse values.

This book is a fine example of ABC's concern. Dr. Heller, a longtime ABC consultant, a psychiatrist with special expertise in broadcasting, has beautifully summarized contemporary thinking on a wide range of sexual themes which appear on television. He has integrated the insights of clinical experience and psychoanalysis with the findings of empirical studies and added his own unique contributions – wit and wisdom.

Acknowledgements

It was almost always Alfred Schneider who, over the years, pressed me to formulate my written thoughts on a rationale for Broadcast Standards judgements. Al has also given me many kindly, helpful suggestions, and insights into the broadcast industry.

To Julie Hoover, Tom Kersey, Lorna and Philip Sarrel, Alan Wurtzel – and especially to Broadcast Standards and Practices editors too numerous to name – I am grateful for many hours of conferences, and painstaking deliberations over numerous scripts and other proposed program materials. Each has contributed immeasurably in sharing their thoughts and judgements in response to the practical program materials upon which this booklet is based.

To my secretary, Wanda Boyd, my lasting gratitude for her infinite patience in typing and re-typing, in keeping my files, and reminding me where I left things last.

Also, I wish to express my sincerest gratitude to, and respect for, the writers, producers and directors who created the many scripts and filmed rough cuts I have been privileged to study over the years.

What I have learned of sex, of children and adolescents, I owe to many mentors, colleagues and close friends who have shared both their professional and parenting experiences with me in many hours of quiet discussion.

Finally, the special things I have learned about sex have come mostly from the inner recesses of persons troubled enough by it to search themselves deeply and share with me what they found. They, above all others, have delved with me into the unspeakable, and even the unthinkable things that move us about sex. To them, a fondly whispered word of thanks.

M.S.H.

Introduction

Writing a brief booklet on two such broad matters as sex and television is a bit like landing on a short, narrow runway with strong crosswinds. There is little room to hem, haw or yaw.

Neither sex nor television is noteworthy as a placid subject. It is easy to start a fight over either one. How can one say enough that is worthwhile – and be agreeable to all – in so short a space? The impossible takes a little longer than a booklet.

First, there is no way to write a bland booklet about sex that is worth reading. Especially if it deals with feelings and standards. That is because sex is not bland and shouldn't be. If the material is bland, then it's not really about sex, but about something else the author is trying to sneak in on you. So, let me tell you how it came about and where I'm coming from.

There were no hidden agendas or subtle messages. Aside from the forty page manuscript limit, I was given an entirely free hand, which has been my consistent experience at ABC. I recall, quite well, what was wanted. "Just give us, in your own words, in forty double-spaced pages, the rationale, the psychological reasons, which you can put down on paper on the subject of sexual editing." In conceiving this booklet for Broadcast Standards editors, it was also requested that it be non-technical, understandable to network affiliates and other industry people and readable by any others who might wish to know how and why network sexual content is edited. The hope was also expressed that the work would be succinct, interesting, relevant, informative, and not too controversial.

Grateful for all these suggestions, I went out the door, my head spinning slightly. Before I could get away, however, two of my network colleagues gave me the following small-craft advisory, "Remember, no value judgements." That parting shot paralyzed me at the typewriter for an entire week (while condensing two file-drawers of materials I had previously sequestered in anticipation of a lengthy book on the same subject).

Then, like an apple falling on my head, came the discovery of the *First Sexual Rule in Broadcast Standards Editing*. It goes like this: *There is no way to avoid value judgements in responsible sexual behavior, nor in its responsible depiction on television.* Once the connection is made between sexual intercourse and its potential consequences, value judgements are inevitable and essential, if sometimes belated. That is what this booklet is about – value judgements. Not yours or mine in particular, but the reasons – or rationale – for making both sexual decisions and editing judgements concerning the depiction of sexual content on network television. Let us see to what extent we might succeed in forty pages.

Some Attitudes About Editing

This Supplement to *Broadcast Standards Editing*[1] provides editors* with a more detailed basis for guidelines in the network management of sexual content in proposed program materials. In order to do this, we shall need to look candidly at some things about sex and at some things about editing. Before we get into sex, let us consider a few aspects of editing.

Editing: The Application of Broadcast Standards

What do editors do? It is the responsibility of Broadcast Standards editors to see that entertainment programming and commercials meet network standards of fairness, accuracy, and community acceptability. This is pursued through the input of trained editors who review and advise at every stage of program development, from initial concept to finished product, in a cooperative relationship with the production community in matters pertaining to audience sensitivity, contemporary tastes, and the balanced presentation of responsible viewpoints and values.**

Broadcast Standards' editing decisions are also reflective of proposed broadcast time, audience composition, and the editor's familiarity with the findings of pertinent research studies, audience feedback and surveys.

Unlike censorship, Broadcast Standards editing requires an open set of clear reasons which are free from hidden agendas of personal preference or secret policy. Acknowledged preferences, policies and pressures may sometimes add grist to the mill of decision, provided that they are listed among the ingredients.

A Broadcast Standards editor cannot always expect universal agreement with his or her decisions. Even the U.S. Supreme Court splits 5-4 after lengthy deliberations. Unanimity is the exception in human affairs. On less lofty levels, like the calls of sports umpires, a Broadcast Standards decision can evoke both objections and support from different groups of viewers. Even the most conscientious editing judgements cannot be all things to all people.

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[1]Heller, M.S., *Broadcast Standards Editing*, American Broadcasting Companies, Inc., New York, N.Y., 1978.

*And other interested persons.

**ABC's Department of Broadcast Standards and Practices employs over 70 full-time staff persons who review over 3000 hours of entertainment programs, approximately 100 theatrical features, and close to 50,000 commercials annually.

Editing: A Professional Practice

There are no sexual standards cookbooks for editors, nor easy recipes which list acceptable and unacceptable program fare. As in real life, circumstances and contexts, rather than content alone, most often make the difference.

Few Broadcast Standards edits are straightforward and easy. Editing practices require the line-by-line assessment of every item of proposed entertainment content and the ability to justify each change.

Case-by-Case Judgements

Infinitely debatable, but unresolved, concerns cannot be kept under indefinite advisement. A satisfactory and timely Broadcast Standards decision must be made. If necessary, a script modification or other treatment is requested. Production schedules are tight. The result is that Broadcast Standards is a busy kitchen which sometimes gets very hot and hard on the nerves.

Now that nerves have been mentioned, this might be a good place to explain why this booklet is written by a psychiatrist, any three of whom are reputed to have four different opinions.

The first reason is that psychiatrists are supposed to know a lot about sexual attitudes, emotions and motivation.

Second, this particular psychiatrist has had the very special experience of consulting for more than a decade with Broadcast Standards editors and executives – listening to questions and concerns about proposed program materials, discussing and analyzing reasons for those concerns, and arriving at suggested remedies.

Third, Broadcast Standards decisions, like those of psychiatrists, inevitably require the making of individual judgments on a case-by-case basis. Broadcast Standards capability is not instantly achieved by a title on the door. It requires the accumulation of professional editing experience and assessment skills through many shared and supervised examinations and treatments of actual script materials each of which becomes a case history, so to speak.

Research Prospects

The behavioral and social sciences have increasingly applied research methodology in the investigation of individual and group behaviors. With reference to sexual behavior and attitudes, a valuable and growing body of scientific literature has been developed, particularly following the pioneering work of Kinsey and his associates[2,3] and the earlier observations and theories of Freud.[4] Sexual research has already provided a wealth of substantiated, factual information which has replaced prior subjective notions about sexual behaviors, practices and attitudes. Although Broadcast Standards editors should be familiar with the basic methodologies, findings and prospects of sexual research, editing remains a professional practice or art rather than a science.

As valuable as they are, research findings cannot yet be applied as simple measures or tests in the daily work of editors. There are, at present, no litmus tests nor linear scales for judging the Broadcast Standards acceptability, or *qualitative* aspects of proposed sexual content. Even *quantitative* studies which attempt to simply count how much sex a program contains are flawed by inherent problems of definition. Exactly what qualifies as sexual content, what does not, and what comes close? When is a depicted kiss to be counted as sexual, when is it not – and what makes it appear that way?

In depiction, as in real life, things that are not sexual to some may have substantial sexual connotations to others. Worse yet are those whose special gifts for vigilance see sex where it is not, and where others fail to recognize it.* The humorous aspects of such "misunderstandings" are among the long-popular techniques of sitcoms, while their psychological significance has received much attention from psychoanalysts.

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[2]Kinsey, A.C. Pomeroy, W.B. and Martin, C.E.: *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, W.B. Saunders, Phila., Pa. 1948.

[3]Kinsey, A.C., Pomeroy, W.B., Martin, C.E. and Gebhard, P.H.: *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, W.B. Saunders, Phila., Pa. 1953.

[4]Freud, S. (1905) *Three Contributions to the Theory of Sex*, Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., New York, N.Y. 1933.

*There is a kernel of truth in their suspicions, however, since sex plays a greater role in our personalities, attitudes and motivations than most of us would like to recognize.

Because sexual attitudes and feelings are considerably repressed in the unconscious, attempts to assess the subjective, emotional aspects of sex require sophisticated methodologies and expert interpretation. Ethical and moral considerations usually preclude the direct manipulation of sexual behaviors in experimental and controlled groups of human subjects.

These difficulties notwithstanding, sophisticated interviewing techniques, psychological test batteries, and scientific surveys continue to provide sources of pertinent information for Broadcast Standards editors. Editors should remain familiar with the findings of scientific studies,* and particularly audience attitude surveys. A number of these have been skillfully conducted by the ABC Social Research Unit. Such efforts to test opinion through survey techniques add considerably to Broadcast Standards assessment of the cutting edge of public acceptance.

Legal and Statutory Guidelines

Supreme Court and legislative attempts to distinguish acceptable from non-acceptable (obscene) sexual depictions and descriptions belabor such language and concepts as "... Prurient interests"**, "lustful thoughts," "patently offensive," and "contemporary community standards."[5]

Although freedom of speech is a network broadcast issue, free speech is not an unqualified right to do one's thing, sexual or not, on television. Simple prudence, operation in the public interest, and the network's sense of responsibility to its audience require attention to taste, balance and fairness. Such considerations are all the more essential for Broadcast Standards and Practices since the "community standards" of a network are not local, but national.

Although legal definitions of obscenity are not directly applicable to the daily deliberations of Broadcast Standards editors, they should be familiar with the language, concepts, prospects and limitations inherent in a legalistic approach to Broadcast Standards issues, and are referred to further legal materials in the Bibliography.

*See Bibliography Section

**Such terms as prurient interests (prurience derives from the Latin for itch, as in pruritis), lustful thoughts, patently offensive and redeeming social value are of little help in day-to-day Broadcast Standards judgements.

[5]Miller v. Calif. 413 S. 15, 24, 1973.

Some Attitudes About Sex

We have now seen that editing is not as straightforward as bricklaying, for example. Hopefully, neither is sex. It is the emotional attitude which determines the nature of the act. Thus, in order to edit, we need to focus on attitudes.

Recent Changes

Surveys of historic and cultural attitudes about sex indicate marked differences in both short and long term cycles of sexual suppression. Following the re-examination of social-moral values during the 1960's Vietnam era, the American scene underwent considerable change in comparison to sexual attitudes in the early part of the 20th century. Certainly, more people are talking about sex, writing about it, and looking at it in explicit movies than ever before. Specifically illustrated manuals of sexual instruction have proliferated in bookstores throughout the country, and sexual themes are handled with increasing candor on television.

These changes in sexual attitudes and behavior are both apparent and real. Sex was always there, and always controversial. It just wasn't talked about as much, at least not in such specific and open terms. Sexual behavior has long been an object of religious concern,[6] and a popular subject of sermons. Such sermons were more explicit in their portrayals of hellfire and brimstone than they were in illuminating the sinful temptations and behaviors themselves. The big subject – sex – was always the same. How it is talked about and depicted seems to have changed.*

[6]Bullough, V.L. "Sex Education in Medieval Christianity," *Journal of Sex Research*, 13:3 185, Aug. 1977.

*The world itself has changed. As Margaret Mead observed, the post-atomic, post-pill, post-Sputnik, post-computer world was no longer the one into which she was born. Young persons, growing up in this new world of infinitely greater potential and risk, would hardly view things – including sex – the way their elders did.

Divergent Attitudes

As in politics and religion, opinions about sex run strong and deep. Although religious and political freedoms were seen as requiring Constitutional protection by our founding fathers, sexual practices were not. The result was that Americans were free to pursue their consciences about religion and politics, but not about sex. Many sexual acts and practices were (and remain) subject to a variety of criminal sanctions in various jurisdictions.

Another difference in attitude is that sex, at least according to some, does not always have to be serious. There are equally sincere persons who find the idea of sex for recreation to be morally inappropriate. Still others report that sex is something they have endured, even suffered, with gritted teeth.*

Many others are simply confused by these varying viewpoints and read manuals to try to gain a better understanding about sexuality.

Where do such sexual attitudes come from, and should any or all be banished from television?

Some Early Origins of Sexual Attitudes

First, we need to understand each others' use of words to make sure we are talking about the same things. People often are not when they talk about sex. This is partly due to the fact that people have sexual sensations and experiences long before they have terms for them, or have ever heard the word sex.**

To begin to understand sexual attitudes, feelings and motivations, sex must be seen as more than genital behavior beginning sometime around puberty. Human erotic sensuality is multi-zonal, and not limited to genital sensations alone. Erotically approached, almost the entire skin and its orifices are "sexy."

Our sexual pre-disposition to erotic sensuality exists from early infancy to old age, in both male and female. What we do with it, or about it, depends upon our experiences and attitudes, as well as the attitudes, experiences and behaviors of those who have reared and nurtured us.

*Aside from pathological gynecological conditions, most cases of dyspareunia (painful intercourse) reflect sexual, emotional problems in otherwise healthy and young persons.

**This includes infants and children, as any observant parent, pediatrician, or diaper-changer knows.

The Sensuous Side of Infant Care

The nurturing of infants and care of the young involve both instinctive and learned, active and passive, reciprocal and intimate experiences. Infant care features such daily sensuous behaviors as rocking, nude nuzzling and bathing, stroking, kissing, sucking (any finger will do), and – in the human offspring – the frequent exposure, annointing, patting dry and powdering of tender genital parts. Sounds sexy? It is. You thought infants just ate and slept? Babies are neither stone cherubs nor rubber dolls. They come complete, with many needs and nerve endings.

Comforting and loving infant-care is sensuous. It is as natural and essential for infant development as mother's milk. Tender intimacy, however, does not come in a bottle. It expresses the mammalian heritage of infant care, adapted to human need.

The sensuous experiences of infancy contribute profoundly to our earliest patterns of personal and inter-personal development through behavioral modelling, imitation and social learning. These experiences meld our basic attitudes toward sensual intimacy and inter-personal adaptation from that time on.

Such early pre-verbal, intimate experiences express a parent's sensuous attitudes by deeds, rather than words. Beginning with these first, crucial imprints, human sexuality thereafter unfolds through distinct stages of physiologic and psychologic development. These cumulatively reflect each child's personal and cultural heritage of relationships with parents, peers and significant others.

Sexuality Defined

With the foregoing in mind, an individual's sexuality can be defined as the sum-total of his or her mental, moral, emotional and behavioral adaptation to the genetic, physical, psychological and socio-cultural characteristics which influence his or her instinctual erotic pre-dispositions. There are many other, shorter, more memorable definitions, but none better.* Although sex is an instinct, what should be remembered is that human sexuality is a personal and inter-personal *adaptation* to that instinct, and not the instinct itself.

We have gone into these sensuous aspects of infancy if only to give some small idea of why so many children need calming down later – during what is the relatively latent stage of sexual development (ages 6-12), and what a powerful but forgotten sensuous legacy is reawakened at puberty.

*Perhaps the most succinct of the many definitions pertaining to sexual matters is Justice Potter Stewart's definition of obscenity – "I know it when I see it." (Jacobellis v Ohio, 378 U.S. 184, 1964).

Some Notes on the Psychology of Concern About Sex and TV

The Social Side of Child Care

As any parent knows, there is more – much more – that must be accomplished in preparing a child, if not for high society, at least for kindergarten. After learning to eat with a spoon, to sleep through the night, and a few basics about who's who, and what's whose at home, the next social milestone is toilet training. This milestone is very big because it is usually accompanied by the introduction of that essential ingredient of group living or civilization – the sense of shame.

Shame and The Child

It is a shame that shame is so important for the development of a sense of conscience or superego.* Aside from our brain size and fingers, shame is the main thing that distinguishes us from animals. Persons who are substantially immune to shame are deficient in superego development, unreliable, untrustworthy, and sometimes dangerous. Only animals and infants lack it completely. Each civilized generation teaches shame to its children along with the alphabet.

The development of a sense of shame is so essential a milestone in individual and human history that it marks the end of childhood innocence in each of us, and the banishment of our lot from the Garden of Eden. This remarkable biblical event records the eating of the forbidden fruit of knowledge after Eve's temptation by no less a phallic symbol than the snake, the earliest origins of sexual shame, guilt and modesty, and the invention of the first bikini – the fig leaf. Coming quite early in each person's life, as it does in Genesis, we are, thereafter, each marked by shame and guilt.

*The superego is a convenient term referring to an individual's conscious and unconscious faculties for self-assessment and self-criticism. Its distress signals are shame and guilt. Its potential reward is a precarious and modest sense of integrity. Inner shame is a form of superego anxiety resulting from a feeling that one has fallen substantially short of one's least acceptable standards. Guilt is that powerful, depressing discomfort which anticipates deserved punishment following inwardly perceived moral transgressions.

Some Early Sex Instructions

With the further development of shame, life changes radically for each infant, as it did for mankind after The Fall. Parental indulgence is increasingly replaced by discipline and responsibility. The self-centered, sensuous pleasures of infancy are rapidly curbed by the carrot of encouragement, and the stick of shame, weighted (as shame always is), by the further threat of deprivation, ostracism or other punishment.

You don't remember? For those who need reminding, the sexual instructions at this age were quite specific, standard and familiar: "Pull your dress down. Pull your pants up. Don't run around like that. Don't let me catch you peeking again. That is private. You are bad. Go to your room. Don't say those words. Those are bad, dirty words. Nice children don't say those words. Shame on you!"*

Now that we have come to this stage of the child's sexual and social development, we—like these young children themselves—are ready to look at sex and television in the home.

Sex and Nudity at Home

A powerful, self-conscious preference for privacy distinguishes human intercourse from animal copulation. Lovers generally do not want to be observed in their act, except by each other. With children running about, some parents cannot always count on each other's undivided sexual attention—and find themselves making love to a cocked ear instead of the passionate person they married. Parental privacy can be a precious commodity not just for intercourse, but for plain, uninterrupted conversation. It is easy to see why many parents get edgy.

Once we understand the pains to which most parents go in order to keep their own sexual behavior from being observed or even heard by their children, it is not hard to understand how much parents would resent seeing the very same acts being depicted by others on TV in front of the very same children. At home.

*Once shame was invented, Broadcast Standards and Practices was inevitable.

Looking and Being Seen

Persons who *crave* the observation of their sexual parts and practices are regarded as perverted *exhibitionists*, and their behavior is subject to criminal sanctions. There are other sexually deviant persons who habitually seek their own sexual gratification through the risky prerequisite of spying on the sexual parts or behavior of unsuspecting others. Such persons too are sexually perverted, and subject to criminal sanctions. They are called *voyeurs*.

Sex and Nudity on TV

We are now ready for the *Second Sexual Rule in Broadcast Standards editing*, and its reason. We are a nation of viewers, not voyeurs. If *sexual intercourse is a private matter between informed, voluntary participants, then this principle of privacy should extend to all outsiders, including home viewers of network television.* One can anticipate, from reviewing rejected script portions, that some writers will still ask, "How about a little bit, just so the viewer knows what's going on?"

The answer is – No. Why? While sexual intercourse can be an Olympic event for lovers, it is neither a private athletic contest nor spectator sport which lends itself to televised preliminaries, playoffs or the climax of a Superbowl. Despite the present market for such fare among persons who voluntarily choose to bring these materials into their homes by private purchase or cable subscription, network television recognizes that sexual intercourse is not for family exhibition when it takes place at home and follows suit.

What about *lovemaking?* Networks, like most of their viewers, are all for lovemaking, affection and romance. That includes depicting the passionate ardor and tender sensuous embraces and kisses of human love. It includes the sounds of music; but not the sounds of sexual intercourse, bodies in rhythmic undulation, or head shots which attempt to reflect an Academy Award climax.

What about showing a *couple in bed* afterwards? That is not necessarily a problem. Little children see their parents in bed quite frequently if they are lucky enough to have their parents living at home most of the time. Children who are not easy about knocking directly on the bedroom door and bringing their "problem" directly to the parental bedside are at a disadvantage. That is an important franchise of young childhood and is more often motivated by equal parts of curiosity and anxiety than by the frequently requested glass of water.

What about right after intercourse? Much better than during it. It happens at home, and should be handled with no less savoir-faire on TV.

The foregoing situations are but a few examples taken from successfully submitted scripts.

What about nudity? Well, there is nudity and nudity: total, frontal, partial, silhouetted, dimly lit, tribal, infant and burlesques of nudity, to mention only some that are encountered in Broadcast Standards review.

Some Contexts of Nudity

Any adult with really big problems over *infant nudity* is unfit to change a diaper, and not much help around a house full of babies. Children frequently see their little brothers and sisters naked – and no one, including network television, should make a big deal out of it.

Tribal nudity, a la "National Geographic," is invariably covered by at least a small frontal apron. This too is no problem, if that is the way the tribespeople normally go about – and their nudity is not unduly ogled, or otherwise exaggerated for the audience, by the camera. It is not the editor's role to distort otherwise sensitive depictions of authentic tribal life by adding sarongs or imagined trappings of decency. If the depicted primitive tribe is comfortable with its nudity and we are not, the problem is the viewer's and neither the tribe's nor the network's.

There are similarly strange, sub-cultural aspects of dress in advanced civilizations, ranging from the practice of purdah among certain Muslims and Hindus to the equally remarkable habit of wearing neckties on Wall Street on a hot, humid day. These conventions are as tribal as nudity and make less climatic sense.

Then, too, there are adolescent cohorts, whose dress and behavior are not tribal traditions, but calculated, juvenile challenges to the authority and propriety of their elders. Here, the matter is not tribal authenticity, but emphasis of a fad. Since nothing can spread a style or fad more effectively than television, Broadcast Standards sometimes must consider the risk of encouraging rebellious dress codes which symbolize irresponsible sexual lifestyles portrayed by glamorous performers who themselves do not behave that way at home.

It will also be recalled that feelings about nudity were much stronger in the past, when nudity was vigorously objected to by Comstock-minded persons.* Merely compare pre-World War I beach wear with that of the pre-television World War II era.

*Anthony Comstock made sexual obscenity a major social issue in the 1870's. This led to the enactment of a number of repressive pieces of legislation referred to as the Comstock Laws.

The reasonable depiction of nudity in *art and sculpture* does not require Broadcast Standards editing. Reasonable means portraying the entire work as the artist depicted it – and not focusing the camera unduly on the sexual parts alone. The nudity of art requires neither emphasis nor exclusion. Such nudity is entirely appropriate when not presented as a peep show.

Nudity and Sexual Humor

There are few endeavors which are not subject to the follies of human enterprise, especially lofty ones. That goes for religion and politics – and certainly for sex. One wonders whether there are more jokes about ministers, priests, rabbis, Republicans, Democrats – or sex. I think sex. I do not have space in this booklet to go into why there is such a proliferation of sexual jokes and such a need for sexual humor. But I will give you a hint. It is hard to keep laughing and sexually aroused at the same time.

There are many individuals who have strict personal standards of sexual morality to which they are clearly entitled. However, when they attempt to impose their personal standards on others to the exclusion of all differing views, a potential conflict arises. Such self-appointed critics are often more immodest in their self-regard than in their sexual comportment and usually are unable to laugh at themselves or admit to the possibility of error in their views.

The human burden of sexual shame is heavy enough. The compensatory human gift of laughter enables us to drop that additional load of sexual tension we place upon ourselves by pompous ideas of propriety. And so burlesque was invented.

Burlesque and Sitcoms

Burlesque is a form of humor, or social commentary, in which overly-rigid, immature and even childish attitudes about sex and nudity are spoofed. Its sexual jokes are precisely the ones that children snicker at and many adults recall fondly. Some of its routines are as old and classical as Mozart.

Sitcoms are contemporary television versions of popular entertainment fare that often draw upon traditional burlesque and music hall comedy routines. Both burlesque and certain sitcoms – though some try to be more sophisticated – are characterized by slapstick, lampooning, a madcap pace, and the unrelenting ridicule of presumptuous postures and attitudes. No human institution, endeavor, or behavior is immune.

All are treated equally at this spicy, but spiteless, risqué roast. There is no real meanness, no real hurting, and no pornography in such burlesque routines.*

Taste, Timing and Context

Two people can tell the same story verbatim. The rendition or reading by one may seem slightly daring, but tasteful and appreciated. The identical content depicted by another person, or under different circumstances, may appear off-color or entirely tasteless. Therefore, there must be, and are, many *contextual factors* that enter into taste considerations of the propriety of proposed sexual content.

Contextual considerations include such factors as the overall quality of the show, its casting and acting, its setting and format, the depth and authenticity of character portrayal, its sensitivity to physical, emotional and moral consequences in storyline development, its accuracy, balance of viewpoint, respect for subject matter and artistic merit, to mention only some. None is more important, however, than time, timing and schedule – not just for sexual content, but for an entire program or series. The right content at an awkward time soon becomes the wrong entertainment program.

Ecclesiastes, long before television, provided what are still the best guidelines for program scheduling, reminding us that there is "...a time to weep, a time to laugh...a time to embrace...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak..." These words of wisdom were, and still are, a fundamental moral reminder that there is a time for everything under the sun, including a time to embrace (sexual content), as well as a time to keep silent. Appropriate timing, including the proposed time of broadcast, remains an essential Broadcast Standards and Practices consideration in any assessment of taste and propriety.

*Pornography is not as complicated as some courts would have us believe. Simply put, the purpose of pornography is to sexually arouse the viewer or listener. The term comes from the Greek word *pornos* for prostitutes and refers to stories they would tell their clients in order to arouse them to genital behavior. If the material is not sexually arousing, it is not pornography. It may be disgusting, lewd or obscene, but if it does not arouse, it fails as pornography. There is none on network television, failed or otherwise.

Everything Else About Sex

Adult Sensitive Themes

If television programming cannot show sexual intercourse or genital nudity without Broadcast Standards restraint, what is left? The answer is that networks can, and should, show everything else about sexual behavior, including its moral issues.

Among Karl Menninger's* valued contributions to mental health is a thoughtful, fetchingly titled book, *Whatever Became of Sin?*[7] Well, sins have not gone away, nor are we ignoring them. They now appear on television as "Adult Sensitive Themes." This is as it should be. In the absence of present prophets, network drama should not take special pains to avoid the ancient biblical task of confronting the people with the extent and consequences of their contemporary sins.

Adult sensitive themes, handled with thoughtfulness and balance, provide viewers with what they really need to know about sex, including its prospects and pitfalls, its risks and potentials in the fulfillment of human love.

What Makes Them Adult

Networks have been given responsibility to deal with human issues. The strong temptations and inter-personal and moral consequences of sex should not be passed over too lightly, especially in the entertainment fare of juveniles. Sex is one of the most important things about which young people "grow too soon old and too late smart."

Adult sensitive themes include such inter-personal, community, and moral issues as pre-marital and extra-marital sex (adultery), teenage sex, prostitution, pornography, contraception, abortion, homosexuality, veneral disease, rape, sexual assault and exploitation, child molesting, sexual deviations, celibacy, impotence, frigidity and incest, for example. All of these are important and prevalent, and some are frightening.

*Recently honored on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

[7]Menninger, Karl, *Whatever Became of Sin?* Hawthorne Books, Inc., New York, N.Y. 1978

Banishing adult sensitive themes, ignoring sin, or calling it by another name, does not make it go away. Through balanced and dramatic depictions, broadcasters can inform, discuss, correct misunderstandings, and assist both child and adult viewers to deal better with sexual concepts in age-appropriate program content. Although regional, sub-cultural and age differences in audience composition continue to require Broadcast Standards and Practices sensitivity, these are not insurmountable problems. Nor are they as important or pressing as the sexual problems themselves.

Sin Defined

For any who have never known sin, or cannot define it, Karl Menninger stresses the following, "... transgression of the law of God; disobedience of the Divine will; moral failure... to realize in conduct and character the moral ideal, at least as fully as possible, under existing circumstances; failure to do as one ought towards one's fellow man (Webster)." In his definition, "broad enough to meet the needs of both believers and non-believers," Dr. Menninger adds that, "... the wrongfulness of the sinful act lies not merely in its non-conformity, its departure from the accepted, appropriate way of behavior, but in an implicitly aggressive quality – a ruthlessness, a hurting, a breaking away from God and the rest of humanity, a partial alienation, or act of rebellion."[8]

It is the presence of this "ruthlessness, hurting, and breaking away" which must be shown in the dramatic, storyline consequences of adult sensitive themes for their Broadcast Standards acceptance. Otherwise, we remain as animals, entertained or inured by the acts of other animals.

[8]Meninger, Karl, op.cit. p. 18.

Sexual Themes And The Portrayal of Consequences

Let us examine now some examples of sexual storylines or themes which illustrate Broadcast Standards concerns about the balanced portrayal of issues and about the prospects, risks, and consequences of sexual behavior.

Pre-Marital and Extra-Marital Sex

Pre-marital sexual behaviors, as observed on page 10, include much more than genital intercourse. Since such behaviors are encountered in teenage dating, dramatic programs which depict them are especially important for young viewers. Broadcast Standards issues lie in duly portraying, and even underlining, the importance of a pre-existing, inter-personal relationship which anticipates continuity, mutual responsibility, and respect for self and others.

Teenage Sex Portrayals

If families provide teenagers with advice on contraceptives, as some do, and then fail to counsel them effectively on their limitations in emotional and vocational maturity, the results can be disappointing, if not tragic. Yet, most parents find it disquieting and difficult to communicate forthrightly with increasingly secretive teenagers about their sexual relationships and prospects with peers. Accordingly, television entertainment should not withhold from teenagers a fuller picture of the emotional and behavioral realities of adolescent sexual unfolding, including the potentials and pitfalls of this crucial stage in their social development.

Entertainment programs which glibly depict teenage sex without clearly presenting its moral and emotional consequences – problems of self image, pressure for peer-group acceptance, (even more than virginal reputation), and the considerable risks of venereal disease and pregnancy[9] – are categorically unacceptable to Broadcast Standards and Practices.

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9 "One million teenage girls – one out of every ten – get pregnant each year... for all their carnal knowledge, in fact, teenagers are surprisingly ignorant about the hazards of freebooting sex." Also noteworthy was the fact that 80% of the country's 5 million sexually active teenagers fail to use birth control because of unwillingness, ignorance, or unavailability of contraceptive devices. *Newsweek*, Sept. 1, 1980, p. 48.

Adult Extra-Marital Sex

The moral, emotional and inter-personal problems of adults tempted by, and engaging in, extra-marital sex are potentially as formidable as those of adolescents. Although adults should know better, many of them do not. Unfortunately, the sensitive, balanced discussion of such behavior has not always received adequate portrayal in network entertainment fare.

Television remains the most effective communications medium in the nation. Depictions of pre-marital/extra-marital sex – and adult promiscuity glamorized as glib, alternative sexual lifestyles for the masses – require the strong, responsible counter-balance of convincing storyline developments that portray human consequences. Balancing does not require sermonizing, but creative dramatic story attention to character development, motives, emotions, moral issues and outcomes which can be so powerfully presented in television form.

Contraception and Abortion

Because contraception and abortion are such pressing contemporary community and moral issues, they require thoughtful depiction and exploration in any dramatic fare which deals with them on television.

Attitudes toward contraception and abortion differ markedly among individuals, sub-cultures, religions and countries.* Whether or not individuals or groups regard contraception as a sin, it remains a powerful emotional, moral and physical issue when pregnancy would be unwelcome.

Because of the alarming statistics of teenage pregnancy (and the aborting of unwanted pregnancies among both single and married females), sensitive, balanced and informative dramatic portrayals of the physical, emotional and moral consequences of contraception and abortion constitute acceptable materials for television programming.

*Recently, contraception has been pursued as a patriotic national policy in such countries as India and China, both of which have had to cope with the equally moral problems of feeding their existing populations.

Prostitution

Prostitution, depicted as catering to the lusts of customers and lining the pockets of pimps, racketeers and occasionally vice-squad cops, is frequently encountered in proposed scripts dealing with crime.

Because of this, some Broadcast Standards commentary is in order.

Prostitution has been condemned, winked at, forgiven, legalized in some places, scourged, favorably compared with the sexual role of housewives, and glamorized (most recently in *The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas).*

If prostitution were merely like moonshine, it could be handled in a similar, light-hearted and humorous fashion on TV. Unlike illicit distilling, however, prostitution is no simple, hill-country, cottage industry which stretches the definition of free enterprise to avoid taxes. The cruel recruitment of prostitutes, their childhood psychological shaping, (not infrequently at the hands of incestuous male relatives), their exploitation as well as self-destructiveness, and cynical rites of passage through the night, are no mere alternative lifestyles.

American prostitution is a generally covert, risky and illicit mega-buck industry that lends itself readily to the exploitation of consumers and providers alike. It is regarded with varying degrees of tolerance by some who see it as an unfortunate, but unavoidable and ancient professional service. That may seem fine for the customer, but prostitution is still a form of sexual cannibalism that annually devours thousands of teenagers, each one of whom has been psychologically shaped and selected for slow sacrifice. Television dramas dealing with prostitution and prostitutes must portray that too, and should not depict prostitutes merely as happy, attractive and sophisticated young ladies selling their taffy at the seashore. Prostitution is the oldest hoax, and it potentially degrades and dehumanizes sex for all parties involved.

Sex, Violence, and Exploitive Themes

Over and beyond the above considerations of sexual exploitation in prostitution, a number of sexually exploitive themes are encountered in submitted scripts including sexual assault, rape, molestation and incest.

Rape is an aggressive, hostile act which terrorizes, humiliates and damages victims. Dramatic fare which deals seriously, rather than sensationally, with the risks and effects of rape, must explore in depth any of the following: the making of the rapist, the rapist's personality, treatment prospects, management of the rapist in the criminal justice/correctional system (instead of the usual script focus on fearfully cornering the rapist, and then watching him fall down an elevator shaft, to everyone's satisfaction but the next victim's).

Of great importance, and most acceptable, are dramatic scripts which deal with the effects of rape upon victim and family. Only TV can show it as it is to enough people to correct the cruel suspicion that the victim somehow invited the attack or didn't scream loud enough. It would be difficult for a single TV drama to handle all these aspects of rape. So there is room for many such scripts in bringing this important societal problem to the screen. Again, the keynotes are balance, character portrayal, and attention to the moral and complex emotional consequences, rather than the sensational physical acts themselves.

Forcible rape must not be portrayed as an erotic event. It is a violent event which accompanies or follows upon violence, or its threat. Violent scenes that graphically or subtly fuse sex with sadistic cruelty, humiliation, pain, punishment, bondage, sustained jeopardy, threat, or the seduction of naive or coerced persons are the standard ingredients of erotic emphasis in pornographic themes. Such emphases are categorically inappropriate for television on Broadcast Standards guideline grounds of negative role modelling, antisocial learning, potential imitation, and stimulation of sexually deviant fantasies or behavior among predisposed persons. For further discussion see *Broadcast Standards Editing*.[10]

[10]Heller, M.S. *Broadcast Standards Editing*. op.cit. pp. 50-55.

Homosexuality

Male and female homosexuals are frequently portrayed as glib stereotypes, rather than multi-dimensional persons. Although homosexuality is regarded as a biblical sin, it is now encountered with increased openness among persons in virtually every walk of life.

Like heterosexuals, homosexuals come in all sizes, shapes, occupations and personalities. Homosexuals have often been the object of illegal entrapment, blackmail, persecution, and cruel commentary – the latest of which is the accusation by some that they are getting their just deserts in the form of the auto-immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Television drama can do much to throw light on this frequently scorned and feared* segment of the population, without either denigrating or glamorizing it. Sensitive dramatizations of the effects of homosexuality on an affected family, as in *That Certain Summer*[11], provide excellent examples of even-handed, insightful explorations of such controversial, alternative lifestyles in television dramas of exceptional merit.

Incest

More recently, a television program on a most difficult sexual taboo, incest, has been produced with meticulous attention to Broadcast Standards considerations, matched by the high quality of its storyline, acting and production. This show, *Something About Amelia*,[12] illustrates what can be accomplished with a frightening, hitherto unspeakable, important societal issue, with tragic consequences for many thousands of children each year. This sensitive theme, generally swept under the rug as "too controversial for television" is a programming and Broadcast Standards landmark. If incest can be handled, then so can numerous other sensitive sexual themes, including venereal disease, sexual deviations and sexual impairments, for example.

*Although homosexuals are feared as child molesters, studies show that child molesters are more often heterosexual rather than homosexual.

[11]Originally broadcast, November, 1972.

[12]Originally broadcast, January, 1984.

Divorce and Separation

Perhaps more important than any of the above "sensitive" sexual topics, is a related one which has become so widespread and commonplace that we are not sufficiently sensitive to it. Divorce can result from sexual problems that manifest themselves in incompatibility, sexual hostility, betrayal and infidelity.

There is probably no greater sexual problem in America today than the failure of sexual love to bind and heal the bruises and contentions of marital life. The importance of sex in a marriage goes something like this. When sex is good, it can account for perhaps 20% of marital happiness. When sex is bad, it can account for 80% of marital misery. Unresolved sexual problems can raise discord to the point of marital demise.

Broadcast Standards considerations in divorce and separation require that it not be shown as an easy option (even in a childless marriage)—but as a broken contract and failed commitment, with all of its shattered promises. While television dramas that explore divorce need not always be approached as tragedies, the presentation should not lead viewers to the capricious and naive conclusion that, "Well, if things don't work out, we can always get a divorce."

The biggest sexual worries of children and teenagers are not venereal disease or pregnancy—but the sexual and emotional problems of their parents, leading to miserable or violent examples of cruelty in failed marriages and to post-divorce acrimony. For such children if their parents' marriage or divorce is not a sin, it is at least a pity.

Divorce has been so rampant on the American scene that television dramas dealing with its causes and consequences will have a hard time catching up with this spreading and pervasive problem.

Sex, Gender and Sexism

Many of these booklet topics could be a large book by themselves. This one especially.

Gender is the nominal, anatomic, external-genital distinction, eagerly looked for in newborns, which labels offspring as male or female. While greeted with apparent joy, an infant's sex may be a not-so-secret disappointment, with lasting adverse effects for the unfortunate offspring.*

The gender denomination, officially recorded at birth, is a powerful developmental and cultural determinant of each person's psycho-social destiny. Familial and cultural sex-role behaviors (stereotypes) are reinforced in each child from infancy on. These are both intentionally and unconsciously encouraged through persistent variations in rearing emphasized for male versus female children. Beginning with pink or blue neonatal ribbons or buntings, male and female development proceeds on separate and unequal tracks.

Simply put, boys are encouraged to be "masculine" and girls are encouraged to be "feminine." Much familial and sub-cultural, conscious and unconscious commentary impinges upon the child's sense of self in specific terms of *sexual identity*. For example, we often tell little boys who cry, "Be a man." While for little girls it's more like, "There, there...of course you feel like crying." Problems can occur when this is overdone, or pursued in an insensitive, rigid fashion.

The adverse effects of sexual stereotyping, based on traditional patterns of child-rearing, concern not only feminists, but thoughtful parents of either sex. Sexist attitudes have abounded on television, as they have in real life. Editors must deal with *sexism* as another important "sensitive" theme for TV drama to depict and should apply the same standards which are required in all other sexual themes.

*The sexual designation at birth may or may not be consistent with the XX or XY gene configuration which actually distinguishes male and female, but is usually accurate.

Sexual Information

We show our children, by patient example, how to use a hammer, a scissors, a sewing machine, a fishing reel, how to read and write, and even how to go to the bathroom. Most parents will take infinite pain, time, patience and even pride, in showing – by clear example – how to do everything that the child may be interested in knowing (and some things that they are not). Our children may even watch us die (as we attended their births). Sex stands alone as the only thing in which we will not instruct our children by letting them watch how we do it.

Sexual Fact Information

We pass on to new generations all that we can teach of civilization's accumulated store of knowledge, religion, history, the arts and sciences. In contrast, each generation starts back at the beginning – and on its own – sexually. Most parents are strangely tongue-tied about sex except for such basic warnings as, "Be good. Be careful. Watch out. Don't take chances. Make sure you know what you're doing." The way we go about it, how can they know what they're doing?

There is little we lie so much about to our children as sex, and not only by omission. Parental reluctance to impart basic information about sex is remarkable. The facts themselves are simple and straightforward, if somewhat astonishing at first blush. Instead of the plain facts, however, each generation succeeds in passing along to the next too much of its own heritage of mixed sexual messages, misinformation, or no information. As a result of parental embarrassment (shame), too many youngsters still experience their first menstrual flow or nocturnal emission as a frightening sign of sickness rather than as a normal event.[13] This is inexcusable, and it should not be emulated on network TV. Silence is a sexual message too – and can raise both Broadcast Standards concerns and moral concerns.

[13]Thornberg, H. "Adolescent Sources of Initial Sex Information," *Psychiatric Annals*, 818: 419-423, 1978. Thornberg and other studies confirm the limited role of parents as sex informers. Except for the origin of babies and menstruation, parents were the initial source of sex information in only 15% of cases, the school 19% and reading 20%. Peers (street information) remain the largest single category of primary source of sexual education (40%). The combined categories of father, physician and minister contributed less than 3%

Sexual Messages and Sexual Attitude Manipulation

Sexual fact information must be distinguished from sexual attitude manipulation. While most parents supply few sexual facts to their children, they are quite active in influencing their child's sexual attitudes, knowingly or not, long before adolescence. Although their advice may be helpful as far as it goes, it is not sufficient or satisfactory – at least judging from the continuing sales of many books and magazines offering sexual guidance. People well into adulthood continue to look for sexual messages and are dissatisfied with those they have received.

We are now ready for the *Third Sexual Rule in Broadcast Standards editing: There is no sexual depiction that does not make a statement, express an attitude, or say something about sex.* Even a nude photograph says something sexually. The voluntary act of merely posing for a nude photo – without any dialogue whatsoever – makes a statement through facial expression or bodily posture alone. With props, the sexual message is amplified. Nude photographs of persons – be they examples of fine art or calendar art – carry sexual messages. Most girlie photos say something like "I'd like it. Come and get it. Don't you wish you were here?" The additions of movement and sound in sexual depictions add further sexual messages. Sometimes the messages are unintentional or even unconscious – but they are there. It is the editor's responsibility to identify them before passing them on.

Stimulation and Arousal

The well formed human figure is attractive, and hopefully sexually attractive, at least to some. Like viewing an attractive person in real life, the depiction of a sexually attractive person on television may also turn heads, and stimulate a viewer's speculations about sex – while still falling short of immediate arousal. That is a fine, but important point of editing distinction.

When it comes to sexual arousal, one can never be sure for everyone – nor confidently count on it, even when desired. Arousal works both ways. There are some otherwise healthy persons who are beyond sexual arousal. There are other more lively individuals who are so readily aroused that a pretty girl, minding her business on a park bench, suffices for the whole day. Arousal, while responsive to external stimulation, is an inner thing, like beauty – and works through the mind (not just the eye) of both TV and real-life viewers. So what is an editor to do?

How can an editor apply a rule of thumb that distinguishes between attractive, stimulating depictions of beautiful people, and those which arouse or "incite lustful thoughts?"[16] When it comes to the daily work of editing such close calls, perhaps Justice Stewart was right.* The editor is alerted to arousal not by a considered sense, but by an immediate erotic sensation. It is your visceral response or feeling, rather than your intellectual faculty, which identifies arousal – unless yours is the only such reaction. As Justice Stewart so pithily remarked: when proposed material arouses, you will "know it when you see it." And if it does, it needs editing.

[16]Roth v U.S. 354, U.S. 476 (1957).

*See Footnote p. 12

Standardized Decision Points In Sexual Editing

All that we have discussed thus far provides Broadcast Standards editors with a rationale for asking themselves the right questions in assessment of proposed sexual content.

The basis for each decision point has already been set forth in the preceding pages. The use of such decision points assures the editor, network and viewer alike that each item of sexual content has been specifically and thoughtfully subjected to a uniform, responsible and rational method of scrutiny.

This brings us to the final and *Fourth Sexual Rule in Broadcast Standards editing – namely: asking the right questions in a consistent, standardized fashion usually brings the right answers when it comes to sexual behavior, or its depiction on television.* Here are the essential decision points to help you focus on the considerations we have discussed in the management of proposed sexual content on network TV.

1. Does the portrayal teach something about sex?
   a. What are its messages?
   b. Does the program contain sexual fact information?
      - If so, is the factual information accurate or misleading?
      - If misleading, how?
2. If a controversial theme, does program responsibly address both sides? If not, what is lacking?
3. Does portrayal ignore the consequences of behavior?
   For example,
   a. Glib portrayal of promiscuous lifestyles?
   b. Glorification of sexual irresponsibility, promiscuity?
   c. Tempt imitation with inadequate attention to risks?
   d. Mislead or misinform viewers of any age?
4. Would the sexual portrayal likely arouse many viewers? If so, what would fix it?
5. Does portrayal degrade persons as sex objects without commentary?
6. Clearly denigrate family or moral values without commentary, consequences or punishment?
7. Depict violent, sadistic sex without storyline portrayal of consequences, suffering, punishment?
8. Portray sexual deviations glibly as alternative lifestyles or casual preferences?
9. Does handling of theme offend known viewer segments (minorities, gays, religious or ethnic groups, etc.)?
10. Does portrayal ignore the human values and potentials of sexual love?

A Look to the Future

These decision points are not graven in stone. They provide editors – at this point in time – with an initial checklist that addresses each of the distinct areas of Broadcast Standards concerns discussed in this booklet.

We have also set forth in this editing booklet the first broadly published attempt to briefly consolidate the sum total of Broadcast Standards considerations in the network management of proposed sexual content. Obviously, in bringing together two subjects like sex and television, other concerned persons may have different considerations or entirely different agendas and priorities.

Of Sex

Although sexual attitudes, practices and morality vary widely, the sexual act itself consists of an impressively popular, but relatively limited, repertoire. There are just so many things one can do anatomically, if not naturally. Even the most youthful and ardent newlyweds must rest, if only briefly – reminding them perhaps that nature retains a vital, third-party interest in their otherwise private sex lives. Despite recurrent and understandable concerns for the morality of the masses, sex has a way of taking care of itself, and needs no watchdogs.*

*But sexual exploitation does. Whatever else one might say about sex, it is nature's way of dispensing tickets to, and assuring continuity of, the greatest audience-participation show (or preview) on the face of the earth, which we fervently pray will have the longest possible run before an increasingly peaceful, productive and reverent viewership.

Of TV

Although basic sexual and entertainment needs are not likely to change appreciably, attitudes toward them will continue to change with the times, and television itself will change. In the increasing competitiveness of a free-enterprise entertainment system, television programming, like nature, will continue to follow the laws of survival of the fittest.

Broadcasters now contemplate the awesome potential of many new technologies in a computerized communications industry soon to be. But what specific materials or content will be broadcast as mass entertainment? When, how much, by whom, with what standards of taste, balance and fairness, and who will decide? The answers to these questions will always involve serious responsibilities, the debate of issues, and liberty concerns – in any society which prizes its right to be called free.

Of Broadcast Standards

The moral responsibility for human value judgements cannot be handed over to irrefutable commissars, commissions or committees, nor to seemingly objective and infallible systems of hardware like Hal of the movie *2001*. Broadcast Standards and Practices, while imperfect, time consuming, and sometimes argumentative – remains an essential network investment in the long-standing cultural legacy of popular, expressive entertainment.

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